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SUBJECT: SEOUL - PRESS BULLETIN; September 24, 2009

TOP HEADLINES

Chosun Ilbo
Korean Confederation of Trade Unions
on Collision Course with ROKG

JoongAng Ilbo
Second Largest Number of Judges and Lawyers Found to Have Graduated
from Daewon Foreign Language High School

Dong-a Ilbo
ROKG Vows to Deal Sternly with Any Political Activities by Civil
Service Unions

Hankook Ilbo
Prosecution, Police, National Tax Service Launch Simultaneous
Investigation of SK Engineering & Construction

Hankyoreh Shinmun
U.S. Judges that ROK Is Wary of U.S.-North Korea Dialogue

Segye Ilbo
Won Smashes 1,200 Line in 11 Months

Seoul Shinmun
Chinese President Hu Jintao: "There is a Possibility that North
Korea May Return to Six-Party Talks"

DOMESTIC DEVELOPMENTS

During a 40-minute ROK-China summit in New York, President Lee explained the "grand bargain" on the North Korean nuclear issue to his Chinese counterpart Hu Jintao, and the Chinese President said, "If each country makes the effort, it is still possible that North Korea may return to the Six-Party Talks." (All) The two nations are close to an agreement on the "grand bargain." (Chosun)

In a related story, the ROK and the U.S. seem to be out of step over the "grand bargain." (JoongAng, Chosun, Hankook, Seoul, Segye) While U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs Kurt Campbell said, "Actually, I - to be perfectly honest, I was not

aware of that (the proposal)," an ROKG official said, "Before President Lee's visit to the U.S., we notified the State Department's office in charge of the North Korean nuclear issue about the "grand bargain," but since it was shortly after U.S. Assistant Secretary Campbell returned from his visit to Japan, he may not have been aware of the proposal." (JoongAng) The U.S. is cool to President Lee's grand bargain, with State Department Spokesman Ian Kelly saying during a daily press briefing, "This is his policy. These were his remarks." (Hankyoreh)

Meanwhile, Spokesman Kelly also said, "We share a common position with South Korea regarding the issue of the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.... We've been very clear that if North Korea takes irreversible steps leading to complete denuclearization... that we and our partners would be prepared to reciprocate in a comprehensive and coordinated manner." (Seoul)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

The Congressional Research Service (CRS) said in a report released on September 9 that, if the Obama Administration offers North Korea bilateral negotiations with the U.S. outside the Six-Party framework, this would mean the end of the Six-Party Talks as an actual forum for negotiations, although it might continue as a nominal institution to ratify any final U.S.-North Korean denuclearization agreement. The report also said that, if U.S.-North Korea bilateral or multilateral dialogue is realized,

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North Korea may demand that normalization of (the U.S.-North Korea) relations must come before denuclearization. (Chosun, Hankyoreh, Segye)

U.S. President Obama said in his first speech to the UN General Assembly, "If the governments of Iran and North Korea choose to ignore international standards; if they...are oblivious to the dangers of escalating nuclear arms races in both East Asia and the Middle East, then they must be held accountable." (Dong-a)

MEDIA ANALYSIS

-N. Korea

All ROK media reported on the ROK-China summit in New York on September 23. During the meeting, President Lee explained the "grand bargain" he was proposing to offer to North Korea (for the complete dismantling of its nuclear program) to his Chinese counterpart Hu Jintao, and the Chinese President said, "If each country makes the effort, it is still possible that North Korea may return to the Six-Party Talks." Conservative Chosun Ilbo reported on its front page that the ROK and China are close to an agreement on the "grand bargain." Meanwhile, conservative Dong-a Ilbo reported that President Lee Myung-bak sought cooperation on the "grand bargain" from China and Japan during his separate summits with the two nations.

Left-leaning Hankyoreh Shinmun reported on its front-page top story that the U.S. is cool to President Lee's "grand bargain," with State Department Spokesman Ian Kelly saying during a September 22 daily press briefing, "This is his (President Lee) policy. These were his remarks."

On this matter, Chosun Ilbo editorialized: "The reason why the U.S. is cool to President Lee's proposal is that, with the U.S. stressing both sanctions and dialogue toward the North, Washington is not pleased that President Lee's "grand bargain" seems to have pulled sanctions against the North off the table."

In JoongAng Ilbo, writer Bok Geo-il opined: "We should declare that if North Korea is recognized as a nuclear state, we have no choice but to develop nuclear weapons. This is the only way to prevent North Korea from being recognized as a nuclear state with the

condition that it will not proliferate its nuclear weapons."

Dong-a Ilbo and moderate Hankook Ilbo reported on U.S. President Obama's speech at the UN General Assembly, where he said, "If the governments of Iran and North Korea choose to ignore international standards..., then they must be held accountable," adding, "The governments of North Korea and Iran threaten to take us down this dangerous slope."

Hankyoreh Shinmun reported that, during a September 23 interview with The Washington Post, Japanese Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama agreed to Washington having bilateral dialogue with the North and sending a special envoy to the communist state.

Conservative Chosun Ilbo carried a story about a report released on September 9 by the Congressional Research Service (CRS). In the report, the CRS said that, if the Obama Administration offers North Korea bilateral negotiations with the U.S. outside the Six-Party framework, it would mean the end of the Six-Party Talks as an actual forum for negotiations, although it might continue as a nominal institution to ratify any final U.S.-North Korean denuclearization agreement. Hankyoreh Shinmun quoted that Dr. Larry Niksch, who wrote the CRS report, as recently saying on Voice of America that, if North Korea demands the lifting of financial sanctions, the U.S. should make a "symbolic" concession because the lifting of the sanctions is a very substantial concession, which, therefore, should not be rescinded until the ultimate goal is achieved.

-UN Summit on Climate Change

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Conservative Chosun Ilbo reported that since major countries did not come up with concrete action plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the UN summit on Climate Change failed to produce tangible results. Hankyoreh Shinmun carried the headline, "U.S., China Supports 'Green' Growth without Concrete Numbers; 'Rough Road' Ahead to Copenhagen."

JoongAng Ilbo editorialized: "China pledged to curb its carbon dioxide emissions by a notable margin by 2020... The U.S. should take a forward-looking attitude like China by having the cap-and-trade bill passed without delay in the Senate. This will pave the way for a new pact to be struck in Copenhagen to replace the Kyoto Protocol which expires in 2012."

Hankyoreh Shinmun editorialized: "Above all, the key is Washington's active attitude. President Obama should exercise leadership to persuade Congress to join this noble global cause."

-G20 Summit

With the G20 summit set to start today, moderate Hankook Ilbo carried the headline, "Exit Strategies Top Agenda; U.S., Epicenter of Financial Crisis, Will Have Less Say." In the same story, the daily also said that the U.S. and China are expected to engage in heated debate over trade imbalance, and that, although world leaders shared the need to prevent global warming, the chances for an agreement on a new climate change pact are slim.

President Obama's Speech at UN General Assembly
Under the headline, "Obama: 'U.S. Cannot Work Alone... Please Help,'" JoongAng Ilbo reported that U.S. President Obama, in his speech at the UN General Assembly, urged the international community to help the U.S. resolve global issues, but despite his meeting with Chinese President Hu Jintao, he failed to resolve the tire trade dispute. In similar stories, newspapers carried the following headlines: "U.S. Officially Abandons Unilateralism" (conservative Dong-a Ilbo); "Diplomacy of Power Undermines U.S. Position; U.S. Declares 'New Leadership'" (conservative Dong-a Ilbo); and "Obama Urges World Not to Make Demands Only to U.S." (conservative Chosun Ilbo);

-Afghanistan

Dong-a Ilbo replayed The New York Times' September 23 story which indicated that, due to a drop in public support in the U.S. for the

war in Aghanistan, Obama is reconsidering the U.S. strategy that he announced six months ago. Covering the same topic, Hankyoreh Shinmun carried the headline, "Conflicts between Obama and U.S. Military over Afghan War Mounting."

OPINIONS/EDITORIALS

TRUTH AND FALSEHOOD OF NUCLEAR UMBRELLA
(JoongAng Ilbo, September 24, 2009, page 47: Excerpts)

By Novelist Bok Geo-il

If North Korea carries out a nuclear attack, will the U.S. extend its nuclear umbrella (to the ROK) at a right time? We are not sure whether the U.S. president will mount a nuclear attack against North Korea without any hesitation. If North Korea executes a terror attack with small nuclear weapons, the U.S. may be in a position to wage a nuclear war even though it does not pose a direct threat to its own security. At this time, if the North offers compensation (for its action) while making some plausible excuses, the U.S. president will be likely to make a "rational decision" by dismissing North Korea's nuclear attack as bygones.

No one is certain that North Korea will not capitalize on this loophole (in the nuclear umbrella) to its advantage. The North has committed horrible terror attacks such as a bombing in Rangoon and a bomb explosion aboard Korean Airlines Flight. Pyongyang will

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continue to threaten us by taking advantage of the loophole in the nuclear umbrella.

We will not tolerate a nuclear North Korea. Unfortunately, it seems that the North's possession of nuclear weapons is being increasingly justified (in the international community.) The period of nuclear possession matters significantly. This is why nuclear states including the U.S. seem to claim "grandfather rights" because they have possessed nuclear weapons for a long time. Against this backdrop, some people in China suggest that the international community should recognize North Korea's nuclear program on the condition that it will not engage in proliferation of its nuclear weapons.

Therefore we should make a "doomsday machine" which responds automatically if North Korea is recognized as a nuclear state. This means that we should develop nuclear weapons. We should point out that the U.S. nuclear umbrella has such a dangerous loophole that we cannot rely on it and that North Korea is too vicious. We should declare that if North Korea is recognized as a nuclear state, we have no choice but to develop nuclear weapons. This is the only way to prevent North Korea from being recognized as a nuclear state with the condition that it will not proliferate its nuclear weapons.

WHY ARE SEOUL AND WASHINGTON OUT OF SYNC?
(Chosun Ilbo, September 24, 2009, page 39)

The unthinkable happened between ROK and U.S. diplomats after President Lee Myung-bak proposed offering North Korea a "grand bargain" of security guarantees and economic aid in exchange for scrapping its nuclear weapons program. Lee made the suggestion during a speech on Monday at the Korea Society in New York.

When asked by reporters about Lee's proposal, Assistant U.S. Secretary of State for East Asian Affairs Kurt Campbell said, "Actually, I -- to be perfectly honest, I was not aware of that." Campbell added, "Nothing of the sort came up in our session with the ROK counterparts" before Lee's speech. U.S. State Department spokesman Ian Kelly said, "I think it's really not for me to comment on the particulars, because it's -- this is his policy. These were his remarks." The New York Times reported that the U.S. government feels Lee's proposal had "surprised" American officials and that Washington felt it was "far-fetched."

But it was the U.S. government itself that first proposed a "comprehensive package" of political and military guarantees and economic assistance. Feeling that it is impossible to resolve the nuclear impasse by offering piecemeal rewards to the North at each stage of denuclearization, the U.S. had brought up a comprehensive approach envisioning various forms of support to North Korea if it scraps its nuclear weapons program. The "grand bargain" proposed by Lee is essentially the same.

That was precisely the plan Campbell, who said he never heard of it, had brought with him during his visit to the ROK in July. "There was a consensus on the fact that the North Korean nuclear negotiations should be approached comprehensively, rather than in different stages," an ROK official said. "But it is possible that U.S. officials had heard the term 'grand bargain' for the first time."

If that is the case, it means that the U.S. government ended up publicly refuting a speech by the ROK president simply because of a difference in wording. This is rare in diplomacy. The reason why the U.S. is cool to President Lee's proposal is that, with the U.S. stressing both sanctions and dialogue toward the North, Washington is not pleased that President Lee's "grand bargain" seems to have pulled sanctions against the North off the table. But the U.S. knows that the consistent stance of the ROK government is to continue sanctions against the communist country.

"In fact, the point that we tried to make was how careful that we need to be at this juncture to be consolidated in our approach,"

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Campbell said. Yet when it comes to Lee's proposal, the exact opposite has happened between the ROK and the U.S. The future of talks with North Korea remains doubtful now that this has happened, especially at a time when fresh nuclear dismantlement talks have yet to begin.

(This is a translation provided by the newspaper, and it is identical to the Korean version.)

TAKING INITIATIVE ON CLIMATE CHANGE
(Hankyoreh Shinmun, September 24, 2009, page 27)

The United Nations (UN) summit on climate change concluded in New York yesterday. The take on this meeting is that it succeeded in maintaining a minimal degree of momentum for the upcoming climate change conference in Copenhagen, where efforts will be made to establish a new climate change agreement to replace the Kyoto Protocol that expires in 2012. This conclusion comes from the slightly more sincere approach to discussions shown by the various countries including a promise from Chinese President Hu Jintao that his country, which leads the world in carbon dioxide emissions, will reduce its emissions markedly by 2020.

Prior to this summit, the dominant view was one of skepticism regarding the Copenhagen conference. This was due to the vast differences in opinion among the various countries on specific reduction targets and the rate of reductions. The U.S., in particular, indicated that it would only participate in the climate change agreement if developing countries like China and India presented binding reduction targets. The developing countries, for their part, responded that advanced nations should bear a larger burden, in that they have a greater historical responsibility for global warming.

Amid this set of circumstances, Hu's promise of "marked reductions" is significant in that it marks a breakthrough in discussions, as China can now serve as a locomotive for other developing countries and the U.S. A climate change agreement cannot perform its proper function without leading roles from the U.S. and China, which together account for 40 percent of worldwide carbon dioxide emissions. Indeed, the Kyoto Protocol, adopted in 1997, lost much of its driving force when the U.S. withdrew, unable to ratify the protocol in the Senate.

However, the situation now is far worse than it was in 1997. Even U.S. President Barack Obama, who was reluctant to take part in an agreement, was compelled to warn that if the world fails to respond immediately to climate change, "we risk consigning future generations to an irreversible catastrophe." Still, the U.S. has not presented any new proposals. This is a regrettable state of affairs.

Now is the time for the nations of the world to transcend their narrow interests and respond together to a worldwide threat. Above all, the key is Washington's active attitude. President Obama should exercise leadership to persuade Congress to join this noble global cause. China as well must fulfill its responsibility as a "G-2" nation by presenting specific reduction targets, and the ROK must also assume an active approach. The new administration in Japan appears to be taking initiative in this area and presented the goal of a 25 percent reduction from 1990 levels by the year 2020. It also has an ambitious plan for using the environmental industry as a new source of sustainable development. Hesitation on the part of any country is tantamount to relinquishing leadership in this area.

(This is a translation provided by the newspaper, and it is identical to the Korean version.)

CHINA ISSUES PLAN TO CUT GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS; NOW IS TIME FOR U.S. TO RESPOND

(JoongAng Ilbo, September 24, 2009, page 46: Excerpts)

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China pledged to curb its carbon dioxide emissions by a notable margin by 2020. During a September 22 speech at the UN Summit on Climate Change, Chinese President Hu Jintao said, "We will endeavor to cut carbon dioxide emissions per unit of GDP by a notable margin by 2020 from the 2005 level". China has emerged as the world's largest producer of greenhouse gas emissions, surpassing the U.S. which accounts for 25% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. This Chinese pledge will provide a breakthrough in striking a post-Kyoto Protocol framework at the UN climate change conference which will take place in Copenhagen, Denmark in December.

The U.S. and China, which are responsible for about a half of the world's carbon dioxide emissions, have been at odds over this issue, passing the buck to each other. China, which still has a long way to go before becoming an economic power, emits the largest amount of carbon dioxide in the world, but emphasizes that the U.S. should take responsibility as a developed country. The U.S. says that unless China vows to reduce carbon dioxide, an international agreement carries no meaning, dimming the prospect of the Copenhagen summit.

The U.S. should take a forward-looking attitude like China by having the cap-and-trade bill passed without delay in the Senate. This will pave the way for a new pact to be struck in Copenhagen to replace the Kyoto Protocol which expires in 2012.

The international community shares the understanding that it is imperative to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to prevent global warming. To this end, developed countries should play an active role. It is noteworthy that the European Union (EU) pledged to reduce emissions from 18% to 20% by 2020 and the new Japanese government promised to cut Japan's greenhouse gas emissions 25 percent by 2020 from 1990 levels. Developed countries also should provide funds and technology support for developing countries to curb greenhouse gas emissions.

Climate change is directly related to the fate of the earth. All countries should realize that climate change is an urgent issue and should make concentrated efforts to make the Copenhagen summit successful. The U.S. should exercise leadership and responsibility.

